



GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

STATE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

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GEORGIA DOT RECOGNIZED FOR PRESERVATION EFFORTS

ATLANTA – Georgia DOT Commissioner Gena Abraham and employees in the Department's Office of Environment and Location and Division of Communications have received the Governor's Award for Historic Preservation and Stewardship for their contributions in furthering the preservation of Georgia's historic properties. The projects impacted an Atlanta railway yard and also included the discovery of a shipwreck in an intercoastal waterway near Savannah.

"Not only does Georgia DOT build some of the best maintained roads in the country, we are taking a leading role in protecting our state's cultural heritage," said State Transportation Board Chairman Mike Evans. "These awards demonstrate the Department's commitment to the people of Georgia, both past and present."

As this year's recipient of the Governor's Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation, Abraham, former State Property Officer and Executive Director of the Georgia Building Authority, was recognized for her leadership in identifying historic state properties and ensuring that prospective buyers include the cost of rehabilitation when making their bid. These procedures will help guarantee that when the Pullman Yards, a state-owned property in Atlanta, is sold that the future developer must make use of the yard's historic properties.

The 28-acre property was originally built as a manufacturing plant by Pratt Engineering in 1904. The Chicago-based Pullman commercial rail company bought the property in 1922, turning it into a repair station for its rail cars. Following Pullman's bankruptcy in 1969, the land passed through a series of owners until the state bought it as a maintenance-and-storage facility for the New Georgia Railroad in the 1990s. The brick and steel complex contains the remains of at least two Pullman rail cars.

The Department was also recognized for its role in the discovery of the USS/CSS Water Witch in the Vernon River near Savannah. The 150-foot, wooden hulled, side-wheel steamer was built in 1851, stationed in Ossabaw Sound during the Civil War, captured by Confederate raiders in 1864 after a fierce battle, and scuttled and burned by the Confederate Navy to avoid it falling back into Union hands in December 1864.

Working with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Georgia DOT identified the location of the lost vessel during an October 2007 underwater survey for the proposed Harry S. Truman Parkway extension. The survey and discovery serve as testament to the Department's commitment to the state's cultural heritages. In identifying the vessel's remains, the state can better manage the preservation of this nationally significant resource.

The Governor's Award for Historic Preservation Stewardship recognized:

Glenn Bowman, State Environmental/Location Engineer;
Rowe Bowen, Cultural Resources Section Chief;
Eric Duff, Archeology Section Manager;
Jim Pomfret, Archeologist
Chad Carlson, Historian
Crystal Paulk-Buchanan, Communications Specialist

The awards were presented last month during the Georgia DNR board meeting in Atlanta.

The Georgia Department of Transportation is committed to providing a safe, seamless and sustainable transportation system that supports Georgia's economy and is sensitive to both its citizens and its environment. For general information on the Georgia DOT, please visit our website (www.dot.ga.gov).

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